

Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council Minutes

DATCP, Madison WI

2/15/2006

Attendance:

Voting members: Bruce Allison, Tim Bauknecht, Bob Brush, Bob Dahl, Matt Duvall, Jeff Edgar, John Gall, Jeff Gorman, Leif Hubbard, Laura Jull, Dave Liska, Mike Maddox, Heather Mann, Mike Michlig, Logan Nelson, Ken Ottman, Dan Traas, Mark Weaver, and Joe Wilson.

Ex-officio, non-voting members: Dick Rideout

Non-voting guests: Cindy Casey, Jeff Roe, Tracey Teodecki

Absent members: Lisa Burban, Joan Stevens, Dick Welch.

Action Items

- Laura Jull needs **council members** to volunteer for the UF BMP advisory committee.
- **Dan Traas** will take council advice on UF conference program issues back to his committee.
- **Council members** should send Dave Liska and Dick Rideout comments in opposition to the billboard bills ASAP.
- **Dave Liska** and **Dick Rideout** will draft a letter to Secretary Hassett and circulate it to council members, advising the DNR to officially oppose the bills.
- **Council members** should notify their constituencies of their position on the billboard bills.
- **Joe Wilson** will lead a committee including **Dan Traas, John Gall, Mark Weaver and Bob Dahl**, to develop advice for the council's recommendation on EAB funding.
- **Dick Rideout** will notify the council when the storm response grant bill is introduced.
- **Cindy Casey** will follow up on suggestions for the urban forestry institute, follow through with the next steps and report back to the council.
- The Communication Committee of **Heather Mann, Matt Duvall, Logan Nelson and Mark Weaver** will move on the committee plans.
- **Dick Rideout** will see that the proposed Communication Committee bylaws change is distributed to the council in time for a vote at the next meeting.
- **Dick Rideout** will provide council with the location of the urban forestry line item in the federal budget.
- **Dick Rideout** will get the council the urban forestry appropriations for all the states.
- **Council members** should encourage their constituencies to apply for NUCFAC grants.
- The **next meeting** of the council has been rescheduled to **Wednesday May 3, 2006** in Madison at DATCP.

TCUSA Banquet:

- Ribbons for Growth Award recipients - **Tracy Salisbury**
- Tree Line USAs ribbons? - **Tracy Salisbury**
- First year TCUSAs since the last banquet and TCUSAs certified for more than 25 years will be recognized during the banquet - **Don Kissinger**
- Name tags will show the number of years they have been certified - **Tracy Salisbury**
- **Jeff Edgar** will ask Larry Meiller to do a roving mic.
- **Heather Mann** will get Dick text for the confirmation letter to encourage attendees to bring stories.
- The press release will have a tree benefit hook and weave in the TCUSA idea rather than stand alone on TCUSA - **Dick Rideout**
- The press release with photo web site given to attendees at banquet – **Dick Rideout**
- 3 laptops needed - **RUFCs**
- **Council members** get Matt Duvall names of breakout experts ASAP.

Minutes

Called to order at 9:45 am

1. John Gall moved to approve the minutes of the 11/30/05 council meeting. Mike Michlig seconded. Motion passed

2C Status of the UF BMPs for invasives – Ken Ottman

The Forestry Invasives Leadership Team met. Ottman is a member and Liska attended as a guest. FILT is the group overseeing the entire invasive BMP initiative. Its members represent a wide range of organizations and interests that affect or are affected by invasive species in forestry settings. The DNR is hiring a ¾-time position to support all 4 tracts. Urban is looking to be 3rd behind forestry and recreation. Work is not expected to begin until this summer. The forestry BMP team is identifying groups to participate. Laura Jull is chairing the urban team and is also looking for volunteers from the council to serve. In addition to council members, “outsiders” should be part of the team. Dave Liska noted that Ken and he “opened some eyes” of some of the FILT members about what urban forestry is and the scope of urban forestry issues.

2D Annual UF Conference Debrief – Dan Traas

Dan reported much positive feedback and no negative. Liska felt the conference was terrific and thanked the members for their work. Cindy Casey noted that it was good visibility to have council members as moderators of the sessions. She also reported that the municipal networking session had about 60 people and was very successful. Liska agreed. Jeff Edgar was concerned that it conflicted with the social with exhibitors as he would have liked to attend. Mike Michlig suggested it could be a separate session. Dick Rideout advised the council to look at the long range goals for the conference and design the programs to meet those goals over time. Dan agreed and will take this advice back to his committee.

2B Bill board bill – Leif Hubbard

Leif summarized the new billboard bills, AB 967 and its companion SB541, and their implications. There are more protections for urban trees, but there are still ambiguities. Leif described this as a “single interest” bill that does not take into consideration all the uses and values of highway rights of way. DOT feels that the current permit system is working well. However, DOT will not be issuing official comments on the bill as they were technically part of its drafting though the drafters did not include their advice. Joe Wilson moved that the council oppose these bills citing reasons articulated by Scenic Wisconsin and others. Bob Brush seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Council members were asked to send Dave Liska and Dick Rideout any additional comments in opposition to the bills ASAP. Dave and Dick will draft a letter to Secretary Hassett and circulate it to council members, advising the DNR to officially oppose the bills. Council members were advised to notify their constituencies.

2E Status of EAB issue – John Gall

John reported that the EAB sessions at the conference were good. There will also be a meeting on February 21 at DATCP with members of the green industry, DATCP and DNR to discuss current and future strategies. Joe Wilson spoke from his NUCFAC point of view strongly advising that the urban forestry profession must ask for significant funds NOW in federal and state budgets. Bob Dahl reported that funding has dropped off dramatically. As a result, Indiana’s policy now is to remove only symptomatic trees and shift the cost to the local governments. What position does this put Wisconsin in? Joe reminded the council that this is an election year and EAB is an international issue. He advised that we get Senator Kohl on board. John Gall said to focus on public awareness and research. Wilson moved that a committee be established to develop advice for the council’s response. Ken Ottman seconded. Motion passed. Dan Traas, John Gall, Mark Weaver and Bob Dahl volunteered to serve on the committee.

DNR Report

Budget: The request for state funding for our urban forestry grant manager position was submitted to the Forestry Leadership Team.

Wisconsin took a 17% cut in its federal allotment this year along with the other states in the Northeast Area.

Storm Response Grant bill status: The bill should be introduced shortly. Dick will notify the council when it is.

Personnel Status:

- The Southeast Region has named Jeff Weatherly as the new Regional Forestry Leader to succeed Richard Denney. Joe Wilson was involved in the hiring process and indicated that despite Mr. Weatherly's lack of urban forestry background, he will be an excellent leader for the region. He will begin on March 6th and Dick has invited him, through Regional Director Gloria McCutcheon, to attend the Tree City USA banquet.
- The recruitment for the vacant Southeast region is progressing. There were no lateral transfers so now the position is noticed for any possible people that are "at risk" for position termination. This is likely a formality and then the position will be advertised nationally.
- Dick's three LTEs are being advertised as the council meets. The positions should be open for the next three weeks and then interviews will be arranged for the most qualified.

Urban Forestry Training Institute

Cindy Casey described the proposal to the council. The next steps are:

Meeting with the primary collaborators.

Survey the communities we've targeted

Input re marketing, pitch and packaging to assure attendance of the targeted group and that their needs are met.

Discussion followed on the content, audience and products of the institute. Cindy will follow up on suggestions, follow through with the next steps and report back to the council.

Financial Report was presented. John Gall moved acceptance, Jeff Edgar seconded and the motion passed.

Communications Committee Revision

Heather Mann presented the Communications Committee proposal to revise its charge. This will require a bylaws change. She also presented her plan that would lay the foundation for the council's public relations efforts. This would include the hiring of a marketing firm to assure that it is done professionally and effectively. She also described the Community Open Space Partnership and the role it could play in the process and the possibility of a grant from the Bureau of Land Management. Logan Nelson, Matt Duvall and Mark Weaver volunteered to serve on the committee. Ken Ottman moved to table a vote on the bylaws change because the council has not had the requisite time to examine it prior to a vote. Logan Nelson seconded. The vote was tabled. Dick will see that the proposed bylaws change is distributed to the council in time for a vote at the next meeting. As the Communication Committee is already in existence, it will continue with its planned actions.

USDA Forest Service Report

Dick presented the highlights of Lisa Burban's report which was provided as a handout. The council requested that he provide them with the location of the urban forestry line item in the federal budget.

NUCFAC Report – Joe Wilson

Joe described the urban forestry earmarks by Senator Kohl and others. Kohl's have been added to the existing budget while most others have skimmed funds off the top of the existing urban forestry appropriation. Congress has rejected the Forest Service's allocation formula for urban forestry that staff and the National Association of State Foresters have been working on for several years. Per Joe's request, Dick will get the council the appropriations for all the states for their information. Joe is disappointed that Wisconsin groups do not apply for NUCFAC grants and he strongly urged members to do so.

Next Meeting

Because of a conflict with an out of state meeting, the next meeting of the council has been rescheduled to **Wednesday May 3, 2006**. It will be in Madison at DATCP.

Tree City USA Banquet

The Council adjourned to the Monona Terrace to continue its meeting regarding the Tree City USA event.

The council went through the Monona Terrace to become familiar with the facility and how it will be set up. It then met in the Wisconsin Room to go through its action item list. The following are changes that were decided:

- Growth Award recipients will now wear ribbons on their name tags
- Could Tree Line USAs also have a ribbon so that they are distinctive?
- First year TCUSAs since the last banquet will be recognized during the banquet.
- TCUSAs that have been certified for more than 25 years will be recognized during the banquet.
- Name tags will show the number of years they have been certified.
- Larry Meiller will be asked to do a roving mic asking communities to share historic tree stories. Jeff Edgar will pursue this. Heather will get Dick text for the confirmation letter to encourage attendees to bring stories.
- The press release will have a tree benefit hook and weave in the TCUSA idea rather than stand alone on TCUSA. DNR's Bob Manwell will assist with this and regional public affairs managers can help with follow up.
- The press release will be provided to the attendees at the banquet and will include the web site where the photos can be found.
- We will need 3 laptops: 1 for lecture hall then captions; 1 for the queue line then the ball room; 1 for captions.
- Matt Duvall is looking for experts to be ringers in the breakout sessions to prevent discussions from moving into myth. Get names to him ASAP.